



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/534,539	05/12/2005	Jean-Marc Goubot	271939US6PCT	7164
22850	7590	07/05/2006	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			OKEZIE, ESTHER O	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3652	

DATE MAILED: 07/05/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/534,539	<b>Applicant(s)</b> GOUBOT ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> Esther O. Okezie	<b>Art Unit</b> 3652	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 8-14 is/are pending in the application.  
     4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 8-10 and 12-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 11 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
     Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
     Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
     a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8/04/2005</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.  |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

1. Claims 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fujioka US 4,753,004.
2. Re claim 8, Fujioka discloses clamping device comprising a system for grasping the upper surface of the object (vacuum sucker tube 36); at least one movable arm (26,27) configured to be moved vertically in relation to the system for grasping and alongside the peripheral surface of an object; and at least one finger (34,35) fitted under the at least one movable arm and configured to be moved under the lower surface, wherein the system for grasping comprises a centering mechanism (Abstract; equalizers 32; figs 5 and 6) comprising fingers that can be extended radially ( col. 1, lines 33-43).
3. Re claim 9, the system is suspended from a column (support rods 20 attached to sleeve 3), the at least one movable arm is suspended from a plate (disks 23 and 24) sliding along the column (col. 2, lines 40-45), and an elevator system (rollers 18) adjust the height of the plate of the column.

Art Unit: 3652

4. Re claim 10, the plate comprises a carriage (push levers 30 and 31 move arms along slide grooves 21 and 22, moved equally by a pair of equalizers 32) configured to slide radially, and from which the at least one moveable arm is suspended, and a carriage slide control (equalizers 32).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crozier et al. US 5,752,729 in view of Yakou et al US 5,127,692. Crozier et al. discloses a grasping and lifting device, the device comprising: a system for grasping the upper surface of the object (vacuum suction cups 22,23); at least one movable arm (25) configured to be moved vertically in relation to the system for grasping and alongside the peripheral surface of an object; and at least one finger (25') fitted under the at least one movable arm and configured to be moved under the lower surface (Abstract; figs 2 and 6), wherein the system for grasping comprising fingers that can be extended inward and outward (see figures 5 and 6; extension rails 56 and 57 reciprocate clamps).

Crozier et al discloses fingers reciprocated inward and outward to accommodate variable lengths of objects, however Crozier et al does not disclose these fingers

Art Unit: 3652

moving radially or extending from the center of a circle. Yakou et al. discloses an article gripping apparatus including a suction member (24) and centering members (82,84,86) that move radially on slide blocks (62,64,66) that slide on guide rods (44a, 44b) in order to center a round object within the gripping device. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of the invention to modify Crozier et al to include a centering device including radially moving fingers as taught by Yakou et al in order to controllably grip round objects by adjusting the gripping fingers radially around the object.

6. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Crozier et al. and Yakou et al. as applied to claim 8 above, and further in view of Sperry US 3,785,691. Crozier et al does not disclose a suction cup with a ball and socket for mounting cup. Sperry discloses a lifting devices including a suction cup (80) mounted to the lifting device by a ball (70) in a bore (71). It would have been obvious to one one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the lifting device of the combination to include a suction cup mounted by a ball and socket arrangement in order to securely engage an object at varying orientations.

7. Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Crozier et al. and Yakou et al. as applied to claim 8 above, and further in view of Paget US 3,383,286. Crozier et al does not disclose a means for inspecting an object to be lifted including a means located on the at least one movable arm and means located within the system for grasping such as a camera of the

Art Unit: 3652

disclosure. Paget discloses a system for handling removable core elements from a nuclear reactor including a lifting assembly. The lifting assembly includes two arms (108) upon which television camera (118) is mounted on the arm and connected above to the system so that "In the event some difficulty arises within the reactor vessel 11, such as in the case of a broken core element, it is frequently desirable that means be provided which enable an operator to view the interior of the reactor vessel. A television camera is sometimes employed for this purpose" (col. 10, lines 42-68). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of the invention to modify the lifting device of the combination as taught by Paget to include a camera on the lifting arm in order for a user to view operations during lifting.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claim 11 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Esther O. Okezie whose telephone number is (571) 272-8108. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 8-6:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eileen D. Lillis can be reached on (571) 272-6928. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3652

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

EOO 6/19/06



EILEEN D. LILLIS  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600